

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/733,030
Amendment filed November 10, 2004
Reply to OA dated August 12, 2004

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-8, and 10-19 are pending in this application. Claims 2, 9 and 20 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15 and 19 have been amended. The applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added. It is believed that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated **August 12, 2004**.

Support for the amendment to claim 1 may be found, for example, in original claim 2. Applicant notes that claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitation of claim 2 appearing in original claim 2 on page 39, lines 13-19, and Applicant submits that the scope of claim 1, as amended, is effectively the same as that of original claim 2.

Similarly, claim 8 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of original claim 9, and claim 19 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of original claim 20, with slight rewording.

The dependencies of claims 3, 4, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16 have been amended accordingly.

Claim 15 has been amended to clarify that the output port is “of a printer driver”, and to replace the wording “upon abstract definition of said output port” with –when there occurs a print request to said port of the printer driver–.

In addition, claims 3, 4, 10, 11, 14 and 16, the phrase “all printers” has been amended to “a plurality of printers.”

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Regarding the Specification (Office action paragraph no. 2)

The Examiner objects to the title of the application as not being descriptive of the claims.

The objection to the title is respectfully traversed. The Examiner has not explained what aspect of the title is not descriptive. Applicant notes that original claims 1-7 recite "a printing system," claims 8-14 recite "a printing method," claims 15-18 recite "a print requester apparatus," and claims 19-20 recite "a printer." The present title, "Printing System, Printing Method and Apparatus" would seem to be consistent with the pending claims.

Reconsideration of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Kadota (U.S. Patent No. 6,697,073). (Office action paragraph no. 3)

The rejection is overcome by the amendments to the claims.

As noted above, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of original claim 2, claim 8 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of original claim 9, and claim 19 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of original claim 20.

Features of the present invention

Claim 1 provides a printing system ensuring an effective management and operation without any need for redefinition on the print requester host regardless of possible addition, change or deletion of the printers on the network.

As recited in amended claim 1, therefore, there is provided a printing system comprising a print requester host; and a single or a plurality of print requestee printers connected via a network to the host; the host "abstractly defining a port of a printer driver serving as an output path to an actual printer." Moreover, "when there occurs a print request to said port of the printer driver, said host automatically selects a specific printer for printing through sequential execution, between said host and said printer on said network, of a retrieval request from said host, a retrieval response from said printer, a print request from said host, and a response to said print request from said printer."

In this manner, when defining a printer on the host, a port of the printer is abstractly defined as a printer driver port and both the host and the printer provide a print protocol control for printer retrieval, etc., whereby a single printer has only to be defined on the host without need for redefinition of the printer even in the case of addition of a new printer to the network, the case of alteration of address, etc., of the existing printer, or the case of removal of the printer from the network, thus achieving effective and easy management or operation of the network and the printer. Furthermore, the host side need not be conscious of the printer to make effective use of the idle printer.

Kadota

Kadota teaches technology such as that described as related art in the present specification on pages 1-2. In Kadota, it is necessary to explicitly set a print requestee printer by a personal computer 1. Kadota accomplishes explicitly setting of the printer through selection of a print port

serving as an output path to an actual printer. The list of print ports of Kadota is automatically prepared in accordance with the flowchart shown in Fig. 5, displayed on the display, and a port selected by the user is defined as the print port.

The print port generated in Fig. 5 contains the printer model name extracted in step S50 and the printer serial number extracted in step S60. Therefore, a user viewing the port list on the display can know the model name and the serial number of the printer from the contents of display of the print port, and can thus select a desired printer.

When a printer is added, a printer is altered, or a printer is deleted, it is necessary in Kadota to prepare another print port list by a personal computer, and the user must make another selection of a print port.

Comparison of the present invention with Kadota

Applicant submits that Kadota does not disclose or suggest the recitation of the present claims.

An essential difference between claim 1 and Kadota lies in that, when there is a print request from the host to the printer driver in claim 1, a print requestee printer is dynamically determined for printing in accordance with a handshaking procedure comprising a retrieval request, a retrieval response, a print request, and a confirmation response with a plurality of printers via the network.

In the contrast to this, in Kadota, printing is fixedly performed by the printer of a port selected by the user. Upon occurrence of a print request from the personal computer, no dynamic

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determination of a requestee pointer via handshaking exchange of information between the printer driver and the plurality of printers for printing is conducted.

Similar arguments apply to independent claims 8, 15 and 19.

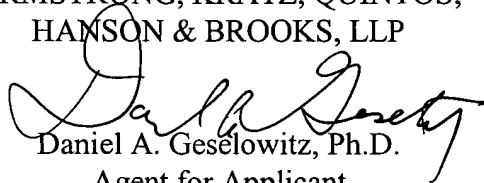
Applicant therefore submits that the pending claims are not anticipated by Kadota et al., and reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, the claims, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned agent at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,
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